

Touching or threatening a police officer or acting in a disorderly manner could result in the filing of additional charges against you and you may be arrested.

- If the officer asks you to step out of your vehicle, do so without any sudden or threatening movements.
- Give the officer approximately 3-5 feet of "personal" space as a safety zone to do his or her job.
- Remain in your vehicle at all times unless told to do otherwise.
- Do not become argumentative, disorderly, or abusive. If you believe that you have been unfairly treated, DO NOT make that argument on the side of the road. Your best alternative is to carry your protest to traffic court.
- In some cases, officers may ask you for your consent to search your vehicle. You have the right to refuse a consent search.

Safety is Our Concern: Don't be Offended

Most citizens already realize that law enforcement is a difficult and dangerous profession. Scores of police officers are killed each year, and hundreds more are injured or assaulted. For these reasons, police officers tend to be extremely cautious. They place a great deal of emphasis on officer safety and survival. Certain safety practices are instilled in our officers from the first day of their careers. Although the procedures maximize safety for the officer, they may seem standoffish, impolite, or offensive to citizens who may not consider such precautions necessary with "them." Even though you have no intention of doing the officer harm,

he or she will probably maintain a defensive posture until the officer feels that there is no threat. There is no such thing as a "routine" traffic stop. Every stop has the potential for danger.

Treating Citizens With Respect

MNPD officers, from day one, are trained in keeping our community safe and enhancing the quality of life for us all. They are taught to be respectful, professional, and courteous in all education and enforcement stops.

If you feel an officer has acted inappropriately, we want to know. Please contact the MNPD Office of Professional Accountability at (615) 862-7322 and tell us of your concerns. You have the right to file a complaint through that office and we will follow up on it.

Our Website also contains further information about submitting complaints at the following URL:

<http://www.police.nashville.org/>

A disagreement over the validity of a traffic infraction or criminal citation is not a complaint. Such disagreements should be directed to the proper court having jurisdiction in the matter.

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**METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE
POLICE DEPARTMENT**



Getting pulled over by a police officer can be a stressful and uncomfortable experience, especially if you have never been pulled over before. This brochure is designed to familiarize you with what to expect in a traffic stop from the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (MNPd).

The primary reason for being pulled over is for your safety and the safety of others. Education is the number one goal of the MNPd. Through driver education and enforcement, our mission is to keep you, your friends, and your loved ones safe on our roadways.

The MNPd has focused on four major areas that studies have shown can reduce collisions, prevent injuries, and save lives. These areas are:

- **Aggressive Driving;**
- **Speeding;**
- **Seat Belts; and**
- **DUI (driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol).**

While there are many other moving violations, these four major areas significantly impact public safety.

Officers carry out the department's primary goal of providing a safe motoring environment for the public. They are responsible for enforcing traffic laws, investigating collisions, and assisting motorists on Nashville/Davidson County highways.

We hope this brochure will help you to feel comfortable with the contact you have with the officer. Please remember that the number one goal is to make you and your loved ones safe on our roadways.

What You Can Expect From the MNPd

- That the officer is courteous, professional and treats you in a respectful and fair manner.
- That you will receive an explanation of why you were stopped.
- That your safety is ensured while in contact with the officer and that he or she will assist you in getting back onto the roadway safely.
- If you are issued a ticket, that it will be explained to you as well as your options for resolving it.

If You Are Stopped By The MNPd

As soon as you notice the emergency lights, pull your vehicle safely over to the right and stop when it is safe.

- Although you might not know the reason, you should pull over right away.
- There may be some problem with your vehicle of which you are unaware.

Remain in your vehicle while the officer approaches.

- Do not attempt to get out of your vehicle or approach the officer.
- Exiting your vehicle does not assist the officer and may be perceived as a threat.

- For the officer's safety and yours, remain in your vehicle.

Turn on your interior light if stopped at night

- A lit vehicle will reduce the officer's concern regarding weapons or other possible threats within your reach.

Keep your hands easily observable, preferably on the steering wheel where they can be easily seen by the approaching officer.

- Reaching under your seat or into your glove box are actions that will cause the officer concern that you may be reaching for a weapon.

Give your license, registration, and proof of insurance to the officer if asked to do so.

- Law requires a driver to turn over this information upon request by a uniformed officer or an officer in plain clothes who displays proper identification.

Answer all questions honestly, be respectful.

- Information pertaining to prior arrests or traffic violations is easily verified via the officer's in car computer or dispatcher.